



State of Utah

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## NEWS RELEASE

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*Winter Wood Burning Season upon Us*

# **‘Red Light Green Light’ Program Already in Action**

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – With Jack Frost whispering in your ear to fire up the wood burning stoves and fireplaces, state air quality officials are cautioning people to spare the air.

The Division of Air Quality’s (DAQ) “Red Light Green Light” Choose Clean Air’s winter program is already in action – a few days earlier than past years. The program, which usually kicks off Nov. 1, is aimed at curtailing air pollution caused primarily by vehicle emissions, wood burning stoves and fireplaces. Inversion days, which occur when cold air traps the pollution beneath a layer of warm air, have already arrived.

The program, now in its 15<sup>th</sup> season, keeps residents along the Wasatch Front apprised of poor air quality conditions that require everyone to limit their driving and wood burning. Today, Salt Lake and Davis county residents are asked to voluntarily limit their driving and not to burn.

“This program has been absolutely crucial for Utah to meet air quality standards in the winter,” said Cheryl Heying, director of the Division of Air Quality. “It’s even more crucial with the tougher federal requirements that cut in half the allowable daily average of fine particulate pollution caused by combustion.”

DAQ monitors air pollution daily and provides a three-day forecast on its Web site: <http://www.airquality.utah.gov/>. “Green” means pollution is low and wood burning is allowed. When pollution builds, “yellow” signals for voluntary no wood burning and efforts to limit driving. When pollution levels approach the standard of 35 micrograms per cubic meter of air a “red” mandatory no burning is issued. Fines can be imposed on offenders.

“If everyone does their part to heed the wood burning warnings and use mass transit whenever possible, it will make a significant difference in our air quality,” added Bob Dalley, manager of the Air Monitoring Center.

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